

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 4, 2005

BOTTORFF: GOV. DANIELS' PROPOSED EDUCATION CUTS SHOW LACK OF JUDGMENT

INDIANAPOLIS -- State Rep. James Bottorff (D-Jeffersonville) is concerned about the lack of judgment

Gov. Mitch Daniels is displaying when it comes to his proposed \$52 million spending cut for education in 2005.

"Gov. Daniels has explicitly said that he wants to improve education in Indiana and that he wants to hold teachers accountable for test scores," said Bottorff. "How does he expect to do either of these when he is under-funding the school programs?"

Every year, the Indiana Department of Education uses a school funding formula that roughly approximates the amount of money each school will require for the year. Traditionally, the estimate falls short of what is actually needed. Funds are set aside to make up this shortfall. But this year, Gov. Daniels has decided to tell schools they are not going to get the funding they need and expect.

In the 71st Indiana House District that Bottorff represents, funding for the Clarksville and Greater Clark County Schools will be over \$600,000 less than expected. The budget for the Greater Clark County Schools will be \$533,281 short, while the Clarksville schools will receive \$76,887 less than needed.

"These schools are not going to be given money they were guaranteed," said Bottorff. "This is not extra cash for them. This is money that has already been budgeted for teachers' salaries, building projects and new equipment."

Along with the \$52 million education funding cut being proposed, the governor is also suggesting that there be no increases in education financing for the next two years. This essentially amounts to another cut as well, since increases in the costs for running a school with higher student enrollments, higher teachers' salaries and rising health care costs will not be factored into the budget.

"The governor has said that he will lead Indiana into a better future, that he will right the supposed wrongs in this state," said Bottorff. "Does he plan on accomplishing this by cutting education? Because that makes no sense."